



## TEACHING STRATEGIES CONSIDERED SUITABLE FOR ENHANCING SKILL ACQUISITION AMONG OFFICE TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT STUDENTS IN KANO STATE POLYTECHNIC

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### Abstract

*The study investigated teaching strategies considered suitable for enhancing skill acquisition among Office Technology and Management (OTM) Students in Kano State Polytechnic. Two research questions guided the study and one null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population and sample of the study was 23 lecturers of OTM. A 5- point structured questionnaire, duly validated by two experts in business education was used for data collection. The reliability of the instrument was ensured using test-retest which yielded co-efficient value of 0.81. Data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and determine the homogeneity of the respondents' responses. T-test was used to test the hypothesis. Findings revealed that teacher-centered teaching strategy was moderately suitable for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM students. Whereas, students centered teaching strategy was seen to be suitable for the same purpose. The paper concluded that students' centered-teaching method was preferred for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM students in Kano State Polytechnic. The paper recommended, among others, that OTM lecturers should strategically select and use appropriate teaching strategy to enhance students' skills.*

**Keywords:** *Strategy, Suitable, Skill acquisition, Office Technology and Management*

### Introduction

Office technology and management (OTM) is a skilled based programme that is aimed at training students to render office support services in modern offices. It is among the programmes offered in Nigerian polytechnics with the aim of preparing the recipients with adequate knowledge, skills and competencies for employment and sustainable development. Fadare (2015) viewed office technology and management as a course of study designed to develop individual skills and information needed to enter and progress in employment. Agoha in Baba and Akarahu (2012) opined that the contemporary skills expected of OTM students are those that would make them well-fitted, competent and independent in the technologies of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The strategies and skills in office technology and management are those that reflect the effective use of modern technology to perform varieties of office occupations.

The broad objective of any educational programme is the ability to use teaching strategies to accomplish a defined goal. Teaching strategy is the guiding materials and techniques which the teacher applies in order to influence students to understand a topic. Aliyu (2013) lamented that strategy is the application of various resources and procedures for teaching contents. On the other hand, Sango (2009) defined teaching strategy as a set



of patterns of instruction either between the teacher and the learner or between the learner and the learning experience for change in behavior. The way teacher plans and organizes activities to engage students under supervision is the strategy for teaching to achieve certain specific and broad objectives. However, Newby in Abdullahi (2012) mentioned that instructional strategies or method of teaching are the relevant procedures and actions applied by the teacher to guide students realize an objective. In another development, strategy of teaching or instructional strategy is a particular way of assembling techniques to deliver an objective (Abdullahi, 2012). The usefulness of instructional strategies varied as course contents varied. The strategies used to achieve a particular task may not necessarily be used to accomplish another. Some objectives require high skill and knowledge by the teacher to deliver, while some require less skill. Therefore, choice of strategy determines level at which skill is acquired.

Several methods of teaching are used by the teacher to deliver the intended content. Yunusa (2014) postulated that most instructional strategies adopted in teaching skills should be those that could encourage students and arouse their interest to learning. This suggests that the strategy for teaching skill should be user friendly and suitable to attain the target task. For example, the Mavis Beacon software is made for teaching typing skill as it follows with game to make the task easy and friendly. This paper attempts to discuss the teacher-centered teaching strategy and the student-centered teaching strategy as they relate to skill acquisition among office technology and management students in Kano State polytechnic. The teacher-centered or the traditional approach strategy is concerned with the teacher who actively participates in the process. Teaching strategy which involves the teacher to have total control in the session is considered to be teacher-centered method.

OKwuanaso and Nwazor (2000) considered lecture method as a teacher-centered method of teaching since the instructor dominates the class through his expertise. The authors added that the method treats students without consideration, while their interest to participate is discouraged. In the lecture method, the teacher is the authority who dislikes interruption; rather the students are expected to act on permission. Dictation from text books and handouts are used to deliver lessons, while students write notes or collect handout as materials for use. Students' understanding through this method is determined by the teacher's experience. Denga (2001) buttressed that, lecture method involves teacher talking to students, while students jots, at times supplemented by handout. For this method, concept is introduced and explanations are made, while change may occur on the students' perception of a problem. Demonstration is another method used by the teacher with the help of visual aid to teach students to overcome misconception (Abdullahi, 2012). By demonstration, students acquire skills as they visually see the reality, actions and technics to achieve a task.

The next method is the drill and practice, as Aliyu (2013) stated that, training in skill development require drill and practice, as it is said "practice makes perfect". The author further added that materials to be learnt should be organized in drill form each time student comes to practice. Drill and practice require steady repetition of activities until mastery is obtained. This method serves as suitable to teaching shorthand and typewriting because exercises are practiced for perfection. Questioning is also used as an approach to teacher-centered strategy. If the teacher wants to know the extent to which the topic is understood, responses are observed by the use of questioning method. Sango (2009) observed questioning as any statement which test or create knowledge. Usually, deferent items relating to a topic can be linked to check the students' level of assimilation.

The second group of strategy is the student-centered learning strategy which is concerned with encouraging students to actively participate in the learning process. The



students are at the center of learning and willing to do things independently. The teacher's role is to give guide to students to accomplish a task. Ibrahim (2017) described student-centered strategy as an effective tool that focused on the students' learning and what the students do, rather than what the teacher does. In this approach, the teacher controls the students' behavior more by good planning than by recourse to reward and punishment (Abdullahi 2012). The guiding points are that the teacher serves as the helper to the students, gives the students some task to do, makes the students know that he is capable of meeting their expectation, inspires the students to discover ideas by themselves.

Problem solving method is applicable to student-centered approach. Atagoga in Abdullahi (2012) considered problem solving as the method that requires teachers to use their initiative in formulating challenging problems that will drive students to find solutions. In this situation, discoverable skills are retained over long period because lots of efforts are made in achieving the objectives. However, if students want to investigate problems with the aim to identify solutions, it is important to consider discovery and enquiry method. Ibrahim (2017) asserted that the aim of this method is to foster a deepened understanding of the content through students' involvement. This approach requires teachers to explain the stages to discover knowledge and skill. Teachers should recognize and appreciate the effort for the new discoveries.

Students' positive learning is also realizable by the use of field trip strategy. The aim of this approach is for students to visit new places with the intention to explore new experiences, exposures and techniques. Denga (2001) noted that field trip strategy produces most educative experience and meaningful learning as well as increased motivation. Based on the scholars' view, it is important that the ability of a teacher to successfully impart necessary knowledge and skills depends on appropriate selection and use of teaching methods, encouraging learning and promoting positive change in behaviors. The reverse is the failure of the teacher to deliver as expected.

Skill in OTM programme is someone's ability to perform a given task within a short time. It is acquired through training and retraining to the point of specialization. Skill is the desired competencies needed to perform efficiently and is considered as an expected pre-requisite in the OTM programme. Inalegwu in Lapak, Moris and Shikfu (2018) defined skills as an expertness, aptitude and competencies appropriate to perform a task with high knowledge, creativity and mastery. Skill acquisition is practical knowledge acquired through repetitive activities that is obtained through training and retraining. Mohmoud and Yunusa (2018) saw skill acquisition, as a process undergone in a programme to achieve efficiency for self-reliance and national development. This reveals that OTM students' skill acquisition is the resultant effect of drill and practice in addition to appropriate procedures to attain a goal. Moreover, skill influences success of OTM students for employment opportunities. Okwuanaso and Nwazor(2000) mention that skill is noticed on secretarial students because of their ability to take dictations in shorthand and operate office machines efficiently. Since the curriculum content of OTM shows the need for students to adequately master and operate modern machines, take dictation and transcribe with the computer, skill acquisition is therefore necessary. Hence, effective teaching strategies are desirable.



### **Statement of problem**

Skill acquisition has been regarded as an essential element of office technology and management programme which must be possessed by the graduates. Skills are pre-requisite that prepare students for employment and self-reliance. Amisi (2018), remarked that equipping OTM students with practical skills, is a guarantee to a white-collar job. In the same way, Baba and Akarahu (2012) added that OTM programme aims at acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competencies, both physical and mental, as resource for individuals to live and contribute to the development of the society. Skill acquisition in OTM is the ability to gather necessary knowledge of executing task correctly without delay. However, in this era of competitive advantage when skill acquisition is desirable, adopting suitable method of teaching students of the OTM programme is worrisome, because most graduates fail to meet the expected office competencies and requisite skills for employment in the labour market. As stated by Oyedele and Fadare (2018) the poor performance of OTM students and lack of adequate skill were attributed to the method of teaching. For practical skills to be imparted, the teacher is expected to give emphasis to selecting effective teaching strategies (Obi and Noeleen, 2018). These predicaments if not addressed, could mar the students' future prospect and chances of employment. The reason for this research is to find the suitable strategies for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM students in Kano State polytechnic.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to ascertain the teaching strategies considered suitable for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM students in Kano State Polytechnic. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Assess the teacher-centered teaching strategy as considered suitable for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM students.
2. Determine the student-centered teaching strategy as considered suitable for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM students.

### **Researcher Question**

The following two research questions guided the study.

1. How suitable is teacher-centered teaching strategy for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM students?
2. How suitable is student-centered teaching strategy for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM students?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. Experienced and less experienced lecturers do not differ significantly in their mean ratings of teaching strategies considered suitable for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM students.



## Method

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study was 23 OTM lecturers. No sample used because the population was small. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire with 21 items on 5 point rating scale. Face validity of the instrument was determined by the opinion of experts. The reliability of the instrument was established using test- retest and obtained an overall reliability value of 0.81. Data was distributed and collected by the researcher through e-mails. Out of the 23 copies of the questionnaires administered, 22 were retrieved and analyzed. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions and determine the homogeneity or otherwise of the respondents responses. Acceptance of any of the questionnaire item was based on the real limit of numbers thus: Very suitable (VS) = 4.50 – 5.00, Suitable (S) = 3.50 – 4.49, Moderately suitable (MS) = 2.50 – 3.49, Fairly suitable (FS) = 1.50 – 2.49, Unsuitable (US) = 1.00 – 1.49. For the test of the null hypothesis, t-test was used. Where p-value was equal to or greater than the alpha level of 0.05, the hypothesis was not rejected. Conversely, the hypothesis was rejected if the p-value was less than the alpha level of 0.05.

## Results

### Research Question 1:

How suitable is teacher-centered teaching strategy for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM students?

**Table 1:** Respondents' mean ratings of teacher-centered teaching strategy as suitable for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM students.

**N = 22**

S/N	Teacher centered strategy	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	Lecture	3.09	0.93	Moderately suitable
2	Demonstration	2.85	1.01	Moderately suitable
3	Drill and practice	4.78	0.97	Very suitable
4	Tutorial	2.51	0.89	Moderately suitable
5	Story telling	3.06	1.03	Moderately suitable
6	Modelling	2.59	1.01	Moderately suitable
7	Questioning	3.52	0.99	Suitable
8	Comparative	2.55	1.03	Moderately suitable
9	Dictation	2.74	1.02	Moderately suitable
10	Discussion	3.33	0.92	Moderately suitable
<b>Mean of means</b>		<b>3.10</b>		<b>Moderately suitable</b>

Table 1 shows that eight items with achieved mean scores from 2.51 to 3.33 signify moderately suitable. One item with an achieved mean score of 4.78 is rated very suitable while an item with mean score of 3.52 is rated suitable. In essence, OTM lecturers considered teacher-centered teaching strategy as moderately suitable for enhancing skill acquisition among their students.



**Research Question 2:**

How suitable is students-centered teaching strategy for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM students?

**Table 2:** Respondents' mean ratings of student-centered teaching strategy as suitable for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM students.

N = 22

S/N	Students centered strategy	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	Problem solving	4.43	1.03	Very suitable
2	Computer aided instruction	4.77	1.01	Very suitable
3	Discovery	3.82	0.83	Suitable
4	Project base	2.73	0.83	Moderately suitable
5	Field trip	3.69	1.05	Suitable
6	Role play	4.56	1.01	Very suitable
7	Team teaching	3.78	0.96	Suitable
8	Brain storming	4.43	0.97	Very suitable
9	Debate	3.71	0.89	Suitable
10	Assignment	2.87	0.95	Moderately suitable
11	Enquiry	3.99	1.04	Suitable
<b>Mean of means</b>		<b>3.89</b>		<b>Suitable</b>

Data in Table 2 indicate that 4 items with means scores of 4.43, 4.77, 4.56 and 4.43 are rated as very suitable. The mean responses of items 3,5,7,9 and 11 are rated suitable while, two items are rated moderately suitable with mean scores of 2.73 and 2.87. The mean of means of 3.89 reveals that lecturers consider students-centered teaching strategy as suitable for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM student.

**Test of Hypothesis**

Experienced and less experienced lecturers do not differ significantly in their mean ratings of teaching strategies considered suitable for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM students.

**Table 3:** T-test analysis of experienced and less experienced lecturers' mean ratings of strategies considered suitable for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM students.

Group	N	Mean	SD	Df	Standard Error	t-cal	P-value	α
Experienced	12	3.01	1.17	20	0.05	-0.11	0.03	0.05
Less Experienced	10	1.93	1.11					Significant



Table 3 reveals that the t-value of -0.11 at 20 degree of freedom, the p-value of 0.03 is less than the alpha level of 0.05. This shows that experience and less experience lecturers differ significantly in their mean ratings on teaching strategies considered suitable for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM students. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected.

### **Discussion**

The finding of the study indicated that the teacher-centered teaching approach was considered moderately suitable for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM students. The resultant effect of this might be the cause of students' incompetence in the world of work. Justified by Oyedele & Fadare (2018), that 60 per cent of OTM graduates in Nigeria remain unemployed due to deficiency in methods of instruction and new technology. This finding tallies with Osogwa and Okoro (2013) who mentioned that adequate skills are not attained by the use of teacher-centered teaching strategies. This brings the issue of breeding unskilled OTM graduates. Similarly, Lapak, Moris and Shifku (2018) who investigated and reported that lack of effective strategy for teaching students plus the required resources, necessitated the inability of OTM programme to equip its recipients with the needed knowledge, attitude and skills required to perform office work.

The finding reveals that OTM lecturers considered students-centered teaching strategy as suitable for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM students. This was confirmed by Ibrahim (2017) that student-centered teaching strategy encourages active participation in the learning process. Irukaku and Noeleen (2018) reported that practical skills can only be imparted through the use of appropriate teaching method capable of influencing the learner to explore potentials. The finding revealed a significance difference between the lecturers mean ratings on the teaching strategies considered suitable for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM students. This could be as a result of teaching exposure, experience or academic qualifications. However, the finding disagrees with Osogwa and Okoro (2013) who discovered no significant difference between federal and state polytechnics lecturers' on the use of modern teaching skills for teaching OTM courses in in Bauchi State. It also contradicted Ezenwafor and Onyinye (2015) finding of no significant difference on the teaching experiences of business teachers on motivation strategy for effective teaching of their subjects.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that student-centered teaching strategy is a better option for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM students than the teacher-centered teaching strategy. Experience has influence on the lecturers' teaching strategies considered suitable for enhancing skill acquisition among OTM students.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the conclusion above, the researcher recommends that:

1. It is imperative that the teachers should strategically select and use appropriate teaching strategy while teaching so as to enhance students' skills.
2. Lecturers should provide an enabling environment that could raise students' interest in collaborative learning situations.
3. Emphasis should be placed on student-centered teaching approach since it makes students active participants in the learning process.



4. The management of the Polytechnic should make sure that teaching strategies used by the lecturers must be the one that will benefit and encourage students' participative learning process.
5. Kano State Government should provide an enabling environment and resources that will enhance skills acquisition in OTM courses.

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